

Coming Soon!

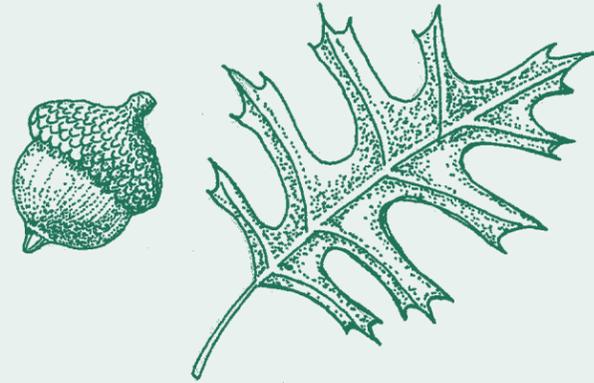
The 1st Annual **HUNT** for **STRANGE & EXTRAORDINARY TREES**

Keep an eye out for them and watch your mailbox in September for details!

Attention Active Members

Looking for a new challenge? Interested in sharing your knowledge of the Forestkeepers program and your love of trees with our new members?

We plan to launch a new mentor program later this year. Call 1-888-9-FOREST (1-888-936-7378) to learn how you can help. ■



4

The Missouri
Forestkeepers
Network



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Forest Relief of Missouri
4207 Lindell Blvd, Suite 301
St. Louis, MO 63108

The Monitor

A newsletter for all participants in the Missouri Forestkeepers Network

The Monitor

Summer 05

How to Hire an Arborist

Adapted by Jon Skinner, Urban Forester, Missouri Department of Conservation from Tree City USA Bulletin No. 6 by The National Arbor Day Foundation

Arborists are people who have careers taking care of trees in yards, parks, along streets, and near utility lines. They work for various companies and government agencies, or independently. While all arborists are primarily involved in planting, pruning and caring for trees, their duties will vary with their specific job. These duties may also include such areas as insect and disease care, hazard tree identification, tree inventory, tree appraisals, fertilization, and tree management planning.

To find the best arborist to work on your trees, consider the following:

- ✦ Check the telephone book. A listing in the directory does not mean the arborist is a good one, but is locally-based and established in business.
- ✦ Beware of individuals who knock on your door. Good arborists are too busy to generate business this way.
- ✦ Ask if the arborist who will actually do the work is certified and belongs to a professional organization. Ask them to substantiate this. The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) certifies individual arborists. These individuals have years of experience and training, have proven their knowledge to ISA, and continue their professional training on an ongoing basis. Most certified arborists also belong to a certifying professional organization, such as the Society of American Foresters.
- ✦ Ask for proof of worker's compensation and liability insurance. They should be

able to provide copies of their insurance certificates. You should call their insurance provider(s) to verify the policies are still in effect and at the amounts specified. Make sure the liability insurance is adequate to cover all potential accidents.

- ✦ Be sure to ask for local references. A good arborist is proud of his/her work and should be able to provide a list of past clients for you to call. This allows you to learn about other customers' experiences with that individual or company.
- ✦ Do not accept "take it now" deals. If you feel pressured, be suspicious.
- ✦ Get multiple estimates for your job, but keep in mind that the best arborist for you may not give the lowest bid.
- ✦ A good arborist will not recommend topping! They will recommend removal and replacement of the tree instead of damaging the tree by this destructive practice.
- ✦ A conscientious arborist will not use climbing spikes, unless the tree is to be removed. Spikes damage the tree unnecessarily. ■



For a list of ISA certified arborists in your area, visit www.isa-arbor.com or call 1-217-355-9411.

Inside this Issue

2
Congratulations Award Winners!

Welcome New Members

3
Forestkeepers Annual Report 2004

4
Coming Soon!

Attention Active Members

pullout
Managing Your Yard for Trees and Grass

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Forestkeepers Network is a project coordinated by Forest ReLeaf of Missouri and the Missouri Department of Conservation. Its goal is to help people conserve, sustain and enhance our state's trees and forests.

For questions on forest health:

Contact your nearest forest district office or Forest ReLeaf of Missouri:
4207 Lindell Blvd.
Suite 301, St. Louis, Missouri 63108
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1-888-9-FOREST
(1-888-936-7378)



New London and Rolla Residents Win Awards

By Michelle Johnson, Forest ReLeaf of Missouri

The 2004 Forestkeepers awards were presented in March at the annual Missouri Community Forestry Council Conference in Osage Beach. Bob and Pat Perry of Rolla received the “2004 Land Steward of the Year” award in recognition of their efforts to protect and care for Missouri’s forest resources as active Forestkeepers. The Perrys are also members of the Ozark Rivers Chapter of the National Audubon Society, and helped to restore an area glade. In addition, Pat took the lead in forming a chapter of Missouri Master Naturalists in Rolla.

The “2004 Environmental Educator of the Year” award went to Theresa Casey of New London, who teaches at Mark Twain Senior High School in Center, Missouri. She used the Forestkeepers materials to teach her biology classes about tree identification, and helped them to conduct tree observations on the school grounds. They planted redbud trees in their outdoor classroom and an additional 200 seedlings near the football and baseball fields in the hopes of developing the area into a wildlife habitat.

Each winner received a commemorative plaque, a tree identification field guide and cover, and complimentary registration to the conference and awards luncheon.

Congratulations to Bob, Pat and Theresa! 📧



For her outstanding efforts in 2004, Theresa Casey (center) receives her award from Justine Gartner (right), Forestry Field Program Supervisor, Missouri Department of Conservation, and Nancy von Brecht (left), Executive Director of Forest ReLeaf of Missouri.

Welcome New Members

We would like to welcome the following members to the Missouri Forestkeepers Network:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Kevin Boltin | George Mehlick |
| Shawn Cooksey | Ben Michel |
| Dennis Coulson | Missouri School for the Deaf |
| Cub Scout Pack 405 Den 3, Festus | Neumeyer Family |
| Mike Doorack | Karen Noel |
| Fairview Conservation/Wildlife Project Group | Ohare Family |
| Kirk Fine | Oklahoma Indians 4-H Club |
| Flower & Garden Design | Jerry O’Neill |
| Girl Scout Troop 227, St. Louis | Ruby Pruitt |
| James Gracey | Ashley Pryor |
| Jami Hardy | Puszcak Family |
| Richard Hashagen | David Rapson |
| Richard Herman | Becca, Ernie, and Julie Riley |
| Paula Hull | Ronald Rosendahl |
| Bryan K. Johnson | Robert Slattery |
| Eric Kessler | Ryan Stacy |
| Susan Kromrie | Taber Homeschool |
| Joe Leeper | Elana and Jonathan Wagner |
| Little Creek Nature Area | Jason Wax |
| Nikki Love | Amy Whitlock |
| James Lovell | Doug Wiles Family |
| Jim Mayes | Willard Middle School |

Membership is free and just a phone call or a click away! Call 1-888-9-FOREST (1-888-936-7378) or visit the website at www.forestkeepers.org. 📧

Correction

The author of the “Turkeys and Woodlands” bulletin in the Winter 05 issue of *The Monitor* was Jeff Beringer, Resource Scientist, Missouri Department of Conservation. We apologize for the error.

Forestkeepers Annual Report 2004

Activity in the Forestkeepers Network was tremendous in 2004. It is exciting to see so many individuals taking action to make the trees and forests in their communities, and on their property, healthier. Thank you for your energy, enthusiasm, and activities last year!

Here is a summary of what occurred around the state:

Member Activity

- 74 new members joined the Network, bringing the total enrollment to 1,576 members.
- Members engaged in a range of activities. Many were very active in their own communities, working with their towns, garden clubs, University Extension Master Gardeners, the US Forest Service, Stream Teams, scout groups, American Tree Farm Association, and high school environmental groups. Others reported writing to state officials and the media regarding conservation issues, attending various conservation-related training events, and staffing exhibits with Forestkeepers materials at local events and fairs.
- Members also invested a significant amount of time improving their own property by planting trees, harvesting timber, conducting timber stand improvement, building trails, removing unwanted vegetation, and monitoring wildlife.
- The hundreds of activities completed by the members totaled 15,109 hours of volunteer time—an increase of 16 percent over the previous year. The dollar equivalent for this time is a remarkable \$259,718.

New Developments

- The website, www.forestkeepers.org, was expanded to include data from tree observation forms submitted in 2003 and 2004, giving all members access to this information.
- A display was designed and placed in Missouri Department of Conservation Nature Centers across the state in an

effort to raise awareness about the program. The eye-catching exhibit is shaped like a tree with a barrel-shaped trunk, and includes a holder for distributing brochures.

- A basic skills workshop was presented in Kansas City, where participants brushed up on their tree identification skills and monitoring techniques.
- An annual meeting was held in Springfield, providing an opportunity for members to share accomplishments, as well as opportunities for the future. Attendees took home door prizes, better tree identification skills, and more knowledge of tree pests.

Network Facts

- The St. Louis region had the greatest increase in enrolled members.
- One of our newest member groups is also the most active. The young adults participating in the Conservation Ambassadors Corps youth education program at the Wyman Center submitted an impressive number of tree observation forms from multiple monitoring locations across St. Louis.
- Forestkeeper members reside in every county in Missouri except for Atchison, Holt, and Mercer counties in northwest Missouri.
- St. Louis and Jackson counties boast the highest number of members.
- Members in St. Louis County have the most monitoring projects; Jackson and Boone counties come in second and third place in this category.

Tree Observations

- In 2004, 34 different types of trees were identified on 110 Tree Observation forms, with a total of 2,027 trees observed.
- The most common types of trees were: white oak (23%); red oak (13%); hickory/pecan (8%); pine (8%); maple/boxelder (7%); and juniper/red cedar (5%).
- The average tree size was 14 inches in DBH, compared to 13 inches in 2003.

We are planning some exciting new projects to be announced in the coming months. Watch your mailbox and future issues of *The Monitor* for details, and thank you for your participation in the Missouri Forestkeepers Network! 📧

**The 2004 Network:
1,576 Members
15,109 Volunteer Hours!**

Managing Your Yard for Trees and Grass

Forestkeepers Bulletin #31

By Gus Raeker, Resource Forester, Missouri Department of Conservation

A common image of a nicely landscaped yard includes a lush green lawn with several large stately trees, a handful of small flowering trees, and scattered beds of flowers and shrubs. However, when many people try to create this kind of landscape in their own yard, they find it is more difficult than they expected. Trees and grass have conflicting and competing needs, so attempts at creating such a yard must involve carefully balancing the needs of each. However, with proper planning and maintenance, a beautiful landscape can result.

Trees

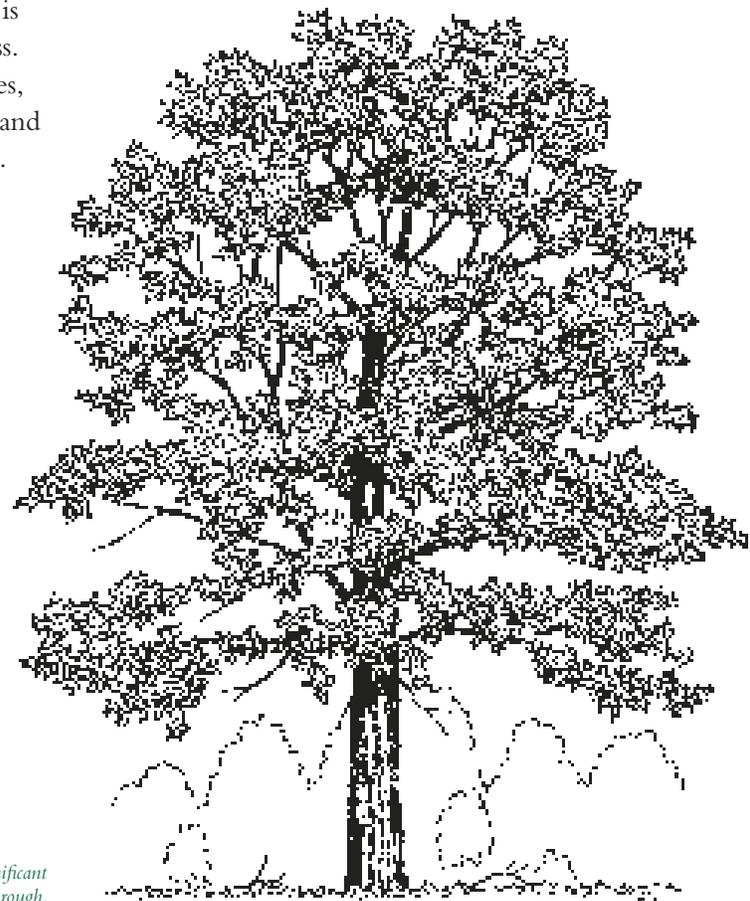
In designing your landscaping, your first step should be to determine if and where it is worth managing for both trees and grass. If you have some areas with a lot of trees, consider saving yourself some mowing and hassle by leaving those areas untouched. Allow the leaves to collect under the trees, creating a natural forest. This approach allows you to avoid the tree/grass battle in these areas and simultaneously provide good wildlife habitat, erosion control and pleasing aesthetics.

Another way you can avoid or minimize the conflict is to do some mulching around your trees. Mulch should be about three inches thick and go out as far as you are willing. This works especially well if you have a few trees close together which can be grouped into one large mulch bed. Mulching has several advantages.

It helps protect the tree trunk and roots from lawnmowers and weed-eaters, which can be very destructive to trees. Mulching also helps maintain good moisture and nutrient levels, and it decreases competition between your trees and other vegetation. When mulching, be sure not to pile mulch up directly against the trunk. Instead, leave a small cup without mulch around the trunk. This will help prevent problems with rot and disease.

Trees and Grass

In areas where it is appropriate and desirable to manage for both trees and grass, consider the needs of each and determine how they



Oak trees allow a significant amount of light to filter through.

Managing Your Yard for Trees and Grass

continued from front

can be provided. One resource that both trees and grass compete for is sunlight. Grass needs a lot of sunlight to thrive. If your yard is full of large trees with touching canopies, it will be difficult for your lawn to get enough sun. Some varieties of grass do better in shade than others. Consult with your local nursery to determine which varieties might work best. However, even shade tolerant grasses need a considerable amount of sunlight.

Two practices can help you maintain a lot of trees and simultaneously get sufficient light to the ground for a healthy lawn. First, make sure that your tree canopies do not cover more than 50 percent of the yard. In other words, if a bird were to look down at your yard, it should find at least half of the lawn visible between the tree canopies. This should still provide room for plenty of trees. If you are trying to create or improve a lawn that already has too many trees, consider thinning some out. When doing this, choose trees of poor quality or health, or undesirable species, to remove.

Second, try to stick with tree species with fairly open canopies that allow some light to filter through. Oaks and thornless honeylocust are examples of trees that allow a significant amount of light to filter through. Sugar maple, red maple and linden are a few species which allow very little light to penetrate through and make grass establishment difficult.

Trees and grass often have conflicting soil needs. Grass generally needs soil with a basic pH while many trees need soil with an acidic pH. Have you ever seen pin oaks in the summer that looked yellow and bleached instead of green? This is commonly found in areas where pin oaks are planted in basic soils, or where the pH has been changed due to lime application for the grass. Basic soils tie up nutrients which are important to pin oak. Soils in areas which were originally forested are often acidic. If you find moss growing in your yard, you likely have acidic soil. It may be necessary to add some lime in order for grass

to become established. However, be careful not to add too much and hurt your trees. Your best bet is to consult with a nursery or get a soil test, which can provide good recommendations. There are also some tree species which are more tolerant of basic soil.

Maintenance

Once you have come up with a proper mix of trees and turf in your yard, it is important that you maintain your landscape properly. Fortunately, most maintenance needs for the two are fairly similar.

Trees and turf need about one inch of water per week. Watering lawns about once a week is usually plenty. Daily or frequent watering encourages shallow roots vulnerable to drought and also invites diseases for both trees and turf. It is also better to water your lawn in the morning. Otherwise, moisture can remain on vegetation overnight and invite disease.

Periodic fertilizing can have some benefit for grass. However, moderation is the key. Excessive fertilizer can do more harm than good. Simply mowing your grass fairly high and allowing clippings to remain on the lawn can do a lot to maintain good nutrient and organic matter levels in your soil.

Given their conflicting needs, combining trees and grass can be a challenge. However, in most areas, proper planning and maintenance will end in good results for both trees and turf. With a little work, any yard can be the envy of the neighborhood! 🏡

